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CALIFORNIA STATE THREAT ASSESSMENT CENTER

24-HOUR REPORT

17 JULY 2018

(U) CALIFORNIA

(U) San Diego – Coast Guard Seizes 8.5 Tons in Eastern Pacific

(U) The Coast Guard announced yesterday it had seized 8.5 tons of cocaine in the Eastern Pacific Ocean. Crews from the cutters Steadfast and Alert interdicted the drugs from four suspected smuggling vessels between late June and mid-July. Steadfast's crew was responsible for two interdictions totaling approximately 5,450 kilograms and Alert's crew seized some 2,392 kilograms in two seizures. The wholesale value of the seized cocaine is estimated at more than \$260 million.

SOURCE: 16 July 2018, [CBS 8](#)

(U) NATIONAL

(U) District of Columbia – Woman Charged with Acting as Russian Federation Agent

(U) Washington – A Russian national with alleged ties to a top Russian official was charged in federal court in Washington yesterday with conspiracy to act as an agent of the Russian Federation, and was ordered held without bond. Maria Butina, 29, was arrested on 15 July in the District of Columbia and made her first appearance in US District Court. Butina is accused of developing relationships with American politicians and a “gun rights organization,” none of which are named in the affidavit supporting the criminal complaint. FBI Special Agent Kevin Helson wrote that Butina was attempting to “establish a ‘back channel’ communication for representatives of the Government of Russia.”

SOURCE: 16 July 2018, [The Washington Post](#)

(U) Texas – Former Juárez Police Officer Linked to Sinaloa Cartel Charged in El Paso

(U) El Paso – A former Juárez police officer accused of overseeing Sinaloa drug cartel warehouses in the Mexican border city faces federal charges in El Paso. Arturo Lozano Mendez, 47, is accused of being the right-hand man to a Chihuahua state police commander who allegedly ran a cell of the Sinaloa cartel made up of corrupt cops in Juárez. In 2012, Lozano was among 24 alleged leaders and key members of the Sinaloa cartel, including reputed cartel kingpin Joaquin “Chapo” Guzman, indicted by a federal grand jury in El Paso.

SOURCE: 16 July 2018, [El Paso Times](#)

(U) INTERNATIONAL

(U) Iran – Four Suspected ISIS Operatives Arrested in Iran

(U) Tehran – Security forces in southwest Iran have arrested four suspected ISIS operatives who were planning attacks, Intelligence Minister Mahmoud Alavi said. Last year, ISIS members carried out attacks on the parliament in Tehran and the mausoleum of the founder of Iran's revolution, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, killing at least 18 people. Separately, three suspected Islamist militants and one member of the Iranian security forces were killed when they clashed on 14 July in northwestern Iran, according to the Revolutionary Guards.

SOURCE: 17 July 2018, [Reuters](#)

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UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY**(U) Mali – Gunman Kill 14 Civilians in Mali**

(U) Bamako – Gunmen shot dead 14 civilians in an attack on a village in northeastern Mali, a local official said yesterday, amid a spate of killings by rival ethnic groups and jihadist militants that threatens to derail a presidential election later this month. Nanou Kotia, the mayor of the regional hub of Menaka, said the attack had occurred on 15 July in a remote village near the border with Niger. The mayor did not say who he believed was responsible for the attack. Previous killings have been carried out by Islamist militants active in the area as well as by fighters from ethnic militia.

SOURCE: 16 July 2018, [Reuters](#)

(U) Peru – 50 Arrested in Anti-Drug Bust at Colombian Border

(U) Lima – Peru arrested more than 50 people yesterday, the majority Colombian, as part of an operation against drug trafficking in a jungle border province where dissident former Marxist Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) rebels have reportedly taken refuge. Peruvian President Martin Vizcarra said his country's security forces coordinated with Colombia's military to carry out operation "Armageddon" yesterday. The operation in Peru's Amazonian province of Putumayo followed repeated attacks by dissident FARC rebels on security forces in nearby Ecuador.

SOURCE: 16 July 2018, [Reuters](#)

(U) PREPARED BY THE CALIFORNIA STATE THREAT ASSESSMENT CENTER.

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